



DEAF SERVICES COMMISSION OF IOWA

Commission Meeting
Friday, August 1, 2014
Lucas State Office Building
321 E 12th, Room 201
Des Moines, IA
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The DSCI Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Legg at 10:00 a.m.

Members present: Theresa Legg, Mark Hersch, Tina Kastendieck, Jennifer Keaton, Martha Meyer and Bob Vizzini

Members absent: Nathaniel Garrels

Staff members present: Heidi Smith, Administrator, CAS Division, Jill Fulitano Avery, Executive Officer, Office of Deaf Services, and Stephanie Lyons, Disability Consultant and Linda Scott

Staff member absent: San Wong, Director, IA Department of Human Rights, *Ex-Officio*

Interpreters: Peggy Chicoine, Stephanie Raymie, Jeff Reese, and Jennifer Taylor

Captioner: Karrie Truitt

Commissioners, staff and interpreters were introduced, visitors recognized and ground rules for the meeting established. **Vizzini objected to the ground rules and wanted some changes made.**

Approval of Minutes from May 3, 2014:

MOTION #15-01: Kastendieck pointed out that on Page 2, under Licensed Sign Language Interpreters, the last sentence of the paragraph says “how do we then *dragoon* interpreters.” Made a motion to approve the minutes as presented with the change rather than using the word dragoon, substitute the word “encourage”. **Kastendieck/Meyer** All in favor, motion carried.

Commissioner/Committee Reports:

Culturally Affirmative Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Aftercare Services: Keaton brought the commissioners up-to-date on a few changes within Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD).

- Community Hands in Cedar Rapids has now opened an office as a non-profit agency for the deaf with approval as a 501.3c. They are beginning to get some grants to begin providing services to former CSD applicants and will also be trying for some county funding to provide mental health services and make independent living skills available to those applicants so they can stay in their homes rather than being placed in a group home or nursing home.

- Community Hands also has Children Enrichment. Activities that aren't in or supported by the schools or private schools. They are looking for grants to provide interpreting services for children who want to be involved in the program.
- they also provide consumer-directed assistive care. In-home services, for example, such as cleaning or cooking for those needing assistance in maintaining their home and being able to stay independent.
- Employment Services within in Community Hands is in its infancy at this time, but they are trying to set up a structure for those seeking employment.
- the company is also hoping to become a Medicaid provider.
- at this time, all of the services are within an 8-10 county region, hoping to expand the services as additional grants become available.
- Website is: www.community-hands.org

Accessible Legal Representation: Hersch provided an update on VRIowa.

- they continue to advance in penetrating more hospitals, especially northern Iowa. They are approaching more of the rural hospitals to put in a remote interpreter system. The ADA appears to be driving this mandate, needing to provide an accommodation to those requesting one.
- VRIowa is starting to obtain some small grants and seem to be making progress in their desire to have all 117 Iowa hospitals have equipment that allows remote interpretation.
- they've made no progress with any ambulance service or EMS provider. It appears they are not interested in providing another service or accommodation that they are not absolutely forced to do.
- Keaton informed the commissioners that those people who qualify for Medicaid services can receive interpreting services for medical reasons – perhaps that's something that the commission should really looking into and something that can be used to our advantage to provide services to those Medicaid recipients.

Licensed Sign Language Interpreters Meeting Competency Standards:

- Vizzini has found improving sign language interpreter standards must first go through the legislative process before it improves.
- in July, attended the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) conference. IAD President Miller and Vizzini went to ~~a workshop~~ **the NAD delegate sessions and discussed many NAD proposals** called ~~"Bills for NAD"~~. There are five (5) top bills that NAD will be focusing on for the next two (2) years. There was actually about 40 proposals presented, and 260 people discussing the issues which were narrowed down to five (5). *A copy of the bills is attached to the minutes.*

Many people at the conference commented on VRI in the hospital setting and how hospitals need to provide adequate accommodations to their patients with live interpreters. Miller wanted to propose a bill relating to this need and present it to NAD but Vizzini wanted to wait and see how the process is working in the state of Iowa.

- the University of Iowa is working on establishing an Interpreter Training Program (ITP). A 4-year bachelor's program is really needed in the state and they've been trying to work on that and working with the legislature and Board of Regents since

final approval comes from those two entities.

Public Comment:

Avery introduced Page Eastin, Iowa Client Assistance Program (ICAP) Coordinator. Eastin provides advocacy and assistance to deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind individuals working with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDOB) or Centers for Independent Living (ICIL). She handed out her business card with contact information to anyone wanting them.

Old Business:

Smith let the commissioners know that Lysie Hanssen would not be coming back as Deaf Services staff when she returned from maternity leave, but rather she will become part-time staff in the Office of Persons with Disabilities as Coordinator of the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). Posting has taken place for a part-time Deaf Services position.

FY15 began July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015 with new funding for the contractual interpreting program in place.

Avery discussed changing agenda items before the commission meetings. Small items off the agenda can be worked through, but any major action items need to be voted on otherwise they may present a legal issue. If anyone wants to add items to the next agenda, those items need to be in the office no later than 14 days **prior** to the next commission meeting to be considered part of the next agenda.

She also emphasized that when e-mailing, you cannot “reply all” any more as it constitutes, or is considered, meeting with the public, so you must reply to Avery and she can go out only and say “this is what was said” and she can go back to the Chair with the information, but if you “reply all”, then you’re technically holding a meeting. This advice has been received from the Assistant Attorney General. Commissioners discussed interaction among themselves and what is considered, and what is not considered, allowable. Avery handed out a piece of information from the Asst. Attorney General on “Receiving Correspondence in Your “Official Capacity”.

Lyons has a genuine concern about interpreters holding temporary licenses. She feels that temporary licenses should “go by the wayside”. Either they have permanent licensure or they don’t. Most professions don’t have temporary licenses, why should interpreters be any different? She is thinking of having a discussion with the Board of Sign Language Interpreters and Translitterators to see what can be done.

Keaton asked if there was anyone on staff who is still going out doing presentations and workshops as there was no one representing DSCI at the recent Region IV ISRID conference. Smith replied that because funding is scarce, we can’t always be everywhere and must prioritize everything we do in the office. If the commission feels it necessary to be at an event, then they need to vote on it and if it doesn’t cost a lot to attend or be part of the meeting, it might be possible to work something out.

Contractual Interpreting Program:

New funding of \$5,000 is available for FY15. From July 1 to August 15, we provided funding for 4 weddings, 4 funerals and 1 family reunion. \$1,350 has been expended with \$3,650 remaining in the fund, paying out up to, but not to exceed \$150.00 per request.

New Business:

Commissioner Meyer provided an update on activities of the Central Iowa Hearing Loss Association (CIHLA) and her attendance at their national convention in Austin, TX. Almost every state was represented, with Iowa being the most poorly represented.

This past week she went to the Iowa State Fairgrounds to pick up State Fair tickets and asked about assistive communications the Fair Board could provide fairgoers. Few knew of the accommodations available but did say that one must call 48 hours in advance to line up devices that could be used in minimal locations throughout the fairgrounds.

MOTION #15-02: Motion to authorize Meyer to attend the June 2015 Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) conference as a member of DSCI and if authorized, to talk about the commission and issues within the community acting in an official role as a member of the commission and bring back information to share with the commission. This is not an authorization to spend money from our budget. **Keaton/Vizzini** All in favor, motion carried.

Deaf Awareness Week Proclamation:

MOTION #15-03: Vizzini moved that we put together another Deaf Awareness Week Proclamation using the same verbiage and document as last year just changing the dates to read 9/21-27/14. **Vizzini/Kastendieck** All in favor, motion carried.

Announcements:

Ashley Hagedorn announced that Relay Iowa will be recognizing a Deaf community leader with an award to be given out in September. They're taking nominations through August 15, 2014.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

Theresa Legg, Chair

Linda Scott, Secretary